

MINUTES
Mansfield Advocates for Children
Wednesday, December 5, 2007
Mansfield Town Hall –Council Chambers
6:30PM-8:00 PM

PRESENT: Kimberly Russo (United Way of the Capital Region, B. Lehmann, L. Dahn, S. Baxter (Staff), J. Higham, C. Guerreri, J. Soroka, J. Stoughton (staff), S. Daley, A. Bloom, N. Hovorka, A. Bladen (Chair), R. Leclerc (staff), J. Goldman, K. Grunwald (staff), K. Paulhus, D. McLaughlin

REGRETS: J. Buck, L. Oransoff

| Time Outcome | Item | Discussion |
|---------------------|---|--|
| 6:30 - 6:40 PM | <u>-Call to order</u> Announcements: | <p>Chair A. Bladen called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. Kimberly Russo of the United Way of the Capital Region introduced herself and talked about the potential for the United Way as serving as our collaborative agent. They currently function as the collaborative agent for the Hartford Discovery community. They could provide us with ongoing consultation, technical assistance, and possible access to training. They would also support us around parent engagement strategies and sustainability issues. There was some discussion about “Born Learning”: a national United Way program, which has not been adopted by the local United Way. They do have access to resources related to this program. They have also assisted collaboratives in locating funding and writing grants. This is consistent with the role of the United Way. Kids are at the core of the work that the United Way does, and they see a role for themselves in supporting the work of existing collaboratives. The United Way would function in this capacity, whether or not they were selected as the collaborative agent.</p> |
| | | <p>Discussion regarding possibly changing our collaborative agent: change can be made at any time; it would make sense to do this prior to January. There was much feeling expressed that we would receive more support from the United Way than we do from Eastconn. There was some consideration for what we might be giving up. Members would like to review the new agreement before it is signed. J.</p> |

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| | | Goldman moved that S. Baxter, K. Grunwald and C. Guerreri and A. Bladen work with the United Way to develop a contract, and inform Eastconn that we are not renewing our agreement with them after the end of the fiscal year. The motion passed unanimously. K. Grunwald will notify Eastconn of our decision. |
| | JOY Program at Jorgensen | |
| | Transition Meeting | |
| | <p>S. Baxter announced that the JOY program at Jorgensen Theater offers free tickets to youth who may not be able to afford events at Jorgensen. Sandy offered tickets to School Readiness families for the Velveteen Rabbit, and 24 people attended. We will be continuing to do this for additional events in the future. A suggestion was made to make these available to families who participate in holiday programs.</p> <p>The meeting was cancelled this week, and will be held next Monday.</p> | |
| 6:40-6:45 | Approve minutes of 11/07/07 | Approved minutes as written. |
| | No Discussion | |

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| 6:45-6:55 | MAC Term Limit | <p>Town Council member Bruce Clouette sent a communication indicating that the Committee on Committees is trying to bring all committees in line with three year terms. He asked that this change be made by MAC. A question was raised by C. Guerreri as to whether or not the issue of appointment by the Council raises any conflict if the committee is advocating for change in Town or BOE policy. The general feeling is that it is the mission of this committee to advocate for young children, although the Council and BOE have the authority to make policy. The issue of politics is one that we need to be aware of. S. Daley suggested developing a guiding principle in the event that we run into opposition on an issue. J. Goldman pointed out that we are not the decision-makers, but we can continue to work and advocate on that particular issue.</p> | <p>Motion made to ammend MAC By Laws to extend Term Limits to 3 years, with the understanding that some members may need to leave before the end of their term. Approved unanimously.</p> |
| 6:55-7:05 | Graustein Local Capacity Grant | <p>S. Baxter referenced a letter in the packet requesting membership in the leadership work group for the Local Capacity Building grant that we have applied for.</p> | <p>Contact K. Grunwald re: suggestions or interest in participating in the Leadership Work Group.</p> |

7:05-
8:00PM

Small Groups

Infant/Toddler Care: J. Goldman reported that the group will do a phone survey of providers. An introductory letter was sent, along with a copy of the survey. S. Baxter has spoken with 8 of 10 providers. She has also met with a program in New Haven (All Our Kin) that has materials to assist providers in becoming licensed. The perception is that there may be some level of unlicensed home care providers operating in Mansfield who could benefit from this support. J. Higham raised the issue of unlicensed home care providers being an issue of affordability. The group met with the Mayor to find out what kind of information the Town is interested in obtaining through this survey process, and the Town is very supportive of this process; sees next steps as involving a partnership with the university. C. Guerreri reminded us that the Early Childhood Cabinet has identified this as a priority, and we may want to be in touch with them. K. Russo will send a powerpoint on Listening Forums that are being held on this issue throughout the State.

Commence telephone surveys. Determine if there is a need for unlicensed providers to become licensed.

Parent Engagement: Ann Pratt from CT Parent Power will be meeting with this group this Friday.

Membership: they are pulling together information for the membership packet. Have developed a working list of what will be included in the packet; S. Baxter has put a question on the Discovery listserve regarding this.

A. Bladen suggested attempting to use the end of each meeting to set the agenda for subsequent meetings. Also, include date of the next meeting on the agenda.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15; Next meeting will be January 9.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Grunwald